What is claimed is:

- 1. An irrigation valve comprising:
 - a valve housing having an interior valve seat;
 - a valve sized to mate with said valve seat;

a guide washer positioned above said valve and having an inner circular channel containing fins;

a diaphragm separating said valve into an upper diaphragm chamber and a lower main water flow chamber; said diaphragm positioned adjacent to said guide washer over said fins; and

a solenoid disposed on said valve housing and configured to create and relieve water pressure within said diaphragm chamber and thereby control water flow through said main water flow chamber.

- 2. The irrigation valve of claim 1 wherein said guide washer is comprised of plastic.
- 3. The irrigation valve of claim 1 wherein said fins extend radially across said circular channel.
- 4. The irrigation valve of claim 1-wherein said fins extend axially to a bottom surface of said circular channel.
- 5. An irrigation valve comprising:
 - a housing separated into an upper chamber and a lower chamber;
 - a diaphragm interposed between said upper and lower chamber;

a scaling member disposed in said lower chamber to control fluid flow within said lower chamber:

said sealing member having an upper surface positioned to contact said diaphragm;

said upper surface comprising a slotted annular space so as to provide support to said diaphragm during substantially all pressure conditions in said upper chamber.

- 6. An irrigation valve according to claim 5 wherein said slotted annular space is an annular space with radially extending fins.
- 7. An irrigation valve according to claim 5 wherein said slotted annular space is an annular space with radially extending bars.
- 8. An irrigation valve according to claim 6 wherein said fins extending axially to a bottom surface of said slotted annular space.
- 9. A method of operating an irrigation valve comprising:

providing a valve by which flow through said valve is controlled by pressurization and depressurization of a diaphragm chamber;

preventing undue tension on a diaphragm of said diaphragm chamber by providing substantially uniform support of said diaphragm during all occurrences of pressurization of said diaphragm chamber.

10. A method according to claim 9 wherein providing substantially uniform support includes supporting said diaphragm with a slotted annular surface.